

THE LIFE DIVINE

universal Nature. Its wall of defence becomes a wall of obscurity which prevents it from knowing all this interaction; it knows only what comes through the gates of sense or through mental perceptions of which it cannot be sure or through what it can infer or build up from its gathered sense data; all the rest is to it a blank of nescience. It is, then, this double wall of self-imprisonment, this self-fortification in the bounds of a surface ego, that is the cause of our limited knowledge or ignorance, and if this self-imprisonment were the whole character of our existence, the ignorance would be irremediable. But, in fact, this constant outer ego-building is only a provisional device of the Consciousness-Force in things so that the secret individual, the spirit within, may establish a representative and instrumental formation of itself in physical nature, a provisional individualisation in 'the nature of the Ignorance, which is all that can at first be done in a world emerging out of a universal Inconscience. Our self-ignorance and our world-ignorance can only grow towards integral self-knowledge and integral world-knowledge in proportion as our limited ego and its half-blind

consciousness open to a greater inner
existence and
consciousness and a true self-being and
become
aware too of the not-self outside it also as
self,—on
one side a Nature constituent of our own
nature,
on the other an Existence which is a
boundless
continuation of our own self-being. Our
being has
to break the walls of ego-consciousness
which it has